



Joint area review

Report for children and young people
Devon

Report for children and young people about the services they receive in Devon

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and doing well at school and as they grow up
- Making a positive contribution to society
- Being successful in whatever they choose to do when they are adults

Why should I read this?

The law says that inspectors must look at and then report on how well local services serve children and young people in an area. This is called a "review". Inspectors visited your area recently. You might like to read this, or the full report which you can find on Ofsted's website, to find out what they had to say.

What did the inspectors do?

Twelve inspectors visited Devon in May and June 2006 so that they could get a feel of what life is like for children and young people in the area. They:

- ❖ listened to a number of children and young people they met in youth clubs and projects, community centres, schools and children's centres
- ❖ talked with adults working with children and young people (such as social workers, teachers, youth workers, nurses, doctors, police officers and councillors)
- ❖ spoke to parents and other people caring for children
- ❖ met with school councils' representatives and members of youth forums
- ❖ heard from the council and other agencies what it thinks about the services it provides for children
- ❖ read a lot of reports; and
- ❖ visited Bideford and the Wonford area of Exeter to see things for themselves.

The inspectors also looked at how well particular children are doing, like those children in council care or those who have a learning difficulty or disability.

How well are children and young people doing in Devon?

- ❖ Most children and young people are healthy but improvements in health are not at the same levels across the county.
- ❖ Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities sometimes have to wait a long time to get the specialist help they need.
- ❖ Although most children and young people are safe, and those who are subject to clear child protection referrals receive a service which meets their needs, not all those at the greatest risk of abuse and neglect get the help they require.
- ❖ Most children and young people enjoy school, attend regularly and make at least satisfactory progress.

- ❖ Standards of attainment in Devon are similar to the national average and many young people go on to further education, training or work at 16.
- ❖ Children and young people who are looked after do not do as well as they should in their education and too many are missing from school.
- ❖ The vast majority of children and young people behave responsibly and many contribute to decision-making that helps shape local services.
- ❖ There is a low rate of offending by young people but there has been a rise in the numbers who re-offend.
- ❖ Young people who want to live independently have difficulty finding a suitable and affordable place to live.

What were the main things children and young people told inspectors about your area?

- ❖ Most children and young people feel Devon is a safe and enjoyable place to live; they feel safe at school and in their local community.
- ❖ Many children and young people would like more things to do and places to go in their leisure time. This is particularly so for older teenagers.
- ❖ It is hard to get to places if you live in a rural area and there is not enough public transport.
- ❖ Most children and young people consider themselves to be healthy
- ❖ It is generally easy to get help, information and advice.

What things did the inspectors say are good for children and young people in my area?

- ❖ Projects in school and in the community that promote healthy lifestyles.
- ❖ The help provided by health visitors to young children and their families and the support given to teenage parents.
- ❖ The settled environments provided for children and young people who are looked after.
- ❖ Support for parents and carers to help their children attend and enjoy school.
- ❖ The efforts made to consult children and young people about the services in the area and to change things in response to what they say.
- ❖ The work of youth service, which provides a good range of activities for 13-19 year olds.

- ❖ Opportunities to get involved in the community and to do voluntary work.
- ❖ Support for young people when they leave care.
- ❖ Information, advice and counselling services, which help young people make decisions about their lives, their education and future careers.

What things are not so good for children and young people?

- ❖ The action taken to protect some children and young people from being neglected and abused.
- ❖ Health and support services for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families.
- ❖ Access to specialist mental health services for all those who need them.
- ❖ Support to help more children and young people achieve higher standards at school, particularly those who are looked after.
- ❖ The availability of leisure activities and social meeting places for young people in villages and in some towns.
- ❖ Access to confidential sexual health advice and support in the more rural areas.
- ❖ Specialist adult health and social care support for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities when they reach the age of 19.
- ❖ Affordable housing for young people who want to live on their own.